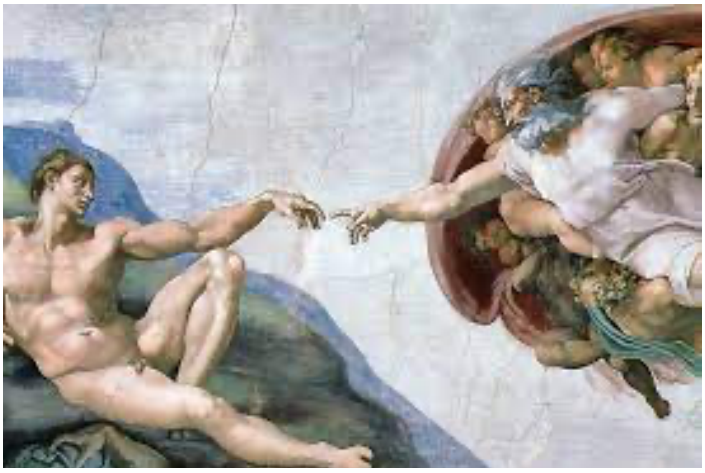
From the Renaissance to the Holocaust:
Europe, Civilization, and Power

Euro 102
Professor: Deborah Harter
Tues/Thurs 1:00 – 2:15 / Rayzor 205

From Machiavelli's *The Prince* to Einstein's query of Freud in 1933 — "Why War?"— Europe has spoken in enduring terms both to the power of civilization and to the forces of power. To study its history is to watch as the Renaissance and Michelangelo reinvent the shape of the human, as Descartes and Newton help to launch a revolution in science, as Enlightenment philosophers celebrate reason and the rights of man in ways that help to inspire the French Revolution, and as the19th century gives birth to the city and the industrial, to great fiction and great poetry.

But Europe's history tells, as well, the story of the extremism that would take hold in the latter part of the French Revolution, reminds us of the cost that the Industrial Revolution would impose upon working men and women, and speaks to the failure of two World Wars in the 20th century to spell the end to war among men. It is both a great and an unsettling story, and a story that I much look forward to exploring together in our small seminar this semester as we read and view seminal works in fiction and philosophy, in history, politics and art.



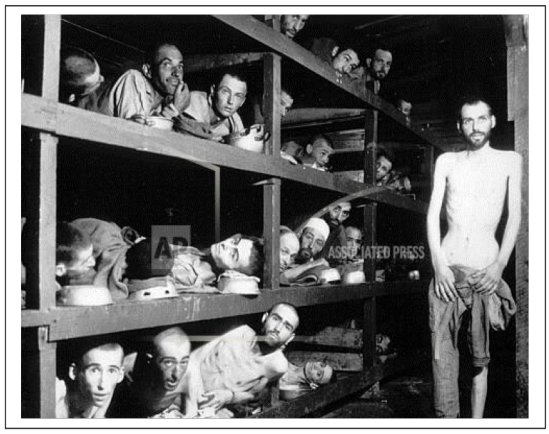
READINGS

Michelangelo, selected images
Machiavelli, *The Prince*
Shakespeare, *Othello*
Descartes, *Discourse on Method* / *Meditations*
Goya, selected images
Kant, *"What is Enlightenment"* (1784)
The French Revolution
Robespierre, "Principles of Political Morality"
Olympe de Gouges "Rights of Woman & Citizen"
Burke and Paine, select readings
Freud, *Civilization and its Discontents*
Kafka, "The Metamorphosis"
Primo Levi, *Survival in Auschwitz*
Beckett, *Waiting for Godot*
Simone de Beauvoir, selections from *The Second Sex*
Thelma and Louise (film)

Syllabus

Jan 11	Introduction: The Renaissance and Humanism
Jan 13	Michelangelo
Jan 18	Machiavelli, *The Prince* (1-45; but skip chapters 4, 7, & 10)
Jan 20	(45-80; but skip 57 (2nd para) to 67). Pay close attn to 47-55
Jan 25	Shakespeare, *Othello*
Jan 27	Shakespeare, *Othello*

Feb 1	Descartes, *Discourse on Method* (excerpt)
Feb 3	Descartes, *Meditations* (excerpt)
Feb 8	Newton, *Principia Mathematica* (1687)
Feb 10	SPRING RECESS
Feb 15	Kant, "What Is Enlightenment?" (1784)
Feb 17	Goya, selected paintings and drawings
Feb 22	French Revolution
Feb 24	Olympe de Gouges, "Declaration of the Rights of Woman" / Robespierre, "Report upon the Principles of Political Morality" (1794), excerpts



Mar 01	Burke and Paine, selected writings
Mar 03	Benjamin, "Paris, Capital of the 19^{tth} Century"
Mar 08	Freud, *Civilization and its Discontents*
Mar 10	Freud, *Civilization and its Discontents*
Mar 15	SPRING BREAK
Mar 17	SPRING BREAK
Mar 22	Kafka, "The Metamorphosis"
Mar 24	Kafka, "The Metamorphosis"
Mar 29	Primo Levi, *Survival in Auschwitz*
Mar 31	Primo Levi, *Survival in Auschwitz*
Apr 05	Beckett, *Waiting for Godot*
Apr 07	Beckett, *Waiting for Godot*
April 12	Beauvoir, *The Second Sex* (excerpt)
April 14	*Thelma & Louise* (film) / Conclusions

Written Work

- Two Formal Papers: 5 pages in length
- Eight one-page (double-spaced) response papers, in which you share your thoughts on the reading for a particular day. Please turn these in both one at a time on the days you choose, and again at end of semester, collected together with a table of contents
- One oral presentation on a work or author of your choice

Grading

- Paper One: 20%
- Paper Two: 20%
- 8 response papers: 20%
- Presentation: 20%
- Regular Attendance and Engaged Participation 20%

A Few Notes

- My Office: 215 Rayzor Hall
- I hope you will feel free to let me know of your pronouns, so that we can address you correctly.
- Our syllabus may change slightly in the course of the semester in order to adjust to those occasions where we need one more, or one less day on a particular text.
- Please don't hesitate to come speak with me during the course of the semester about any difficulties you might have, whether academic or personal.
- Students with disabilities are encouraged to speak with me about any needed accommodations at any time, and to contact the Director of Disabled Student Services at the Ley Student Center for any guidance that I cannot provide.
- For those participating in Athletics, do bring with you any information I might need from our Athletics Department.